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The Magic Lantern Gazette

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The Magic Lantern Society of
the United States and Canada

www.magiclanternsociety.org

Pickpockets at a Magic Lantern Show

Pickpockets at the American Museum—On the 4th of July, a lady had her pocket picked at the Museum, of a valuable gold Lepine watch.—Do not the managers of that establishment know that *Dusty Bob* makes the Museum an almost nightly resort?—When the gas is shut off for the Dissolving Views, the utmost facilities are offered for these rascally sneaks to operate. We think this hint will be sufficient.

The National Police Gazette,
July 11, 1846

This issue of the *Gazette* contains a surprise—some completely new information on John Fallon's Stereopticon, revealed by chance through independent research by an attorney in Washington, who came upon my earlier article on John Fallon. The resulting article reveals new information about the involvement of a young photographer, Philip Coombs, with the tours of Fallon's Stereopticon, as well as additional information and even a photograph of Rev. J. C. Fletcher, an occasional lecturer for Fallon's exhibitions. Much of the new information comes from personal letters written by Coombs to his family, and discovered by chance by William Bollman, the author of our feature article.

This issue also contains a Research Page with summaries of an unusually rich selection of recent academic articles relating to the magic lantern, covering everything from photographs of atrocities in the Belgian Congo to the influence of the magic lantern on the writings of Lewis Carroll, two pieces by society member Erkki Huhtamo on peepshows and the history of moving images, and an interesting article on the magic lantern art of Henry Underhill. There also are two article on thaumatropes, including one suggesting the occurrence of Paleolithic thaumatropes discovered by archaeologists in caves. All of this material indicates that scholars in a variety of fields are beginning to take the history and culture of the magic lantern seriously as a subject for research.

Sadly, this issue also is an occasion to say goodbye to Sharon Koch, who passed away a few months ago. Sharon became interested in magic lanterns through her father-in-law, Joe Koch, one of the founders of our society. She carried on Joe's legacy, particularly in the activities of the Northwest Group, but also in the society as a whole. Everyone will remember her enthusiasm for all things related to the magic lantern, and her dedication to advancing the programs of our society as President and in other capacities. She was a fixture at all of our recent conventions, including the most recent one in Tacoma this summer. She will be greatly missed.

I have filled in some empty spaces in this issue with a short poem on the magic lantern from a 1904 book, as well as a story from 1877 on a children's holiday magic lantern show. There also is an announcement of our Student Research Award, which already has generated some interest among graduate students working on research related to magic lanterns.

I have a slight backlog of future articles. I already began editing an article on illuminants for the magic lantern by John Davidson, which proved to be too long for this issue, and Terry Borton has just sent in a detailed write-up of his convention talk on 238 eminent magic lantern lecturers. I expect these articles will appear in the Winter and Spring issues.

As always, I am eager to receive additional material, including long or short research articles on magic lantern history, stories about magic lantern collecting, and other items of interest to our members.

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Sharon Koch (2nd from right) with other members of the Northwest Group of the Magic Lantern Society of the United States and Canada at the 2012 convention in Tacoma, Washington. Photo by K. D. Wells.

John Fallon's Stereopticon Revisited

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It all started with an email from Bill Bollman in June. "Wow," the message read. "Just by chance I happened to do a Google search for 'John Fallon Stereopticon,' just like I did a year or so ago when I was drafting a book about a fellow named Philip Coombs–only this time I came up with a hit–your article! I haven't been able to see a copy of it yet, but would love to read it."

What? Another person in the world doing a Google search for "John Fallon Stereopticon"? How could this be?

It turns out that Bill Bollman, an attorney in Washington and a collector of old photographic albums, had been doing research on a largely unknown photographer from the 1860s, Philip Coombs. In 1861, Coombs took stereoscopic photographs of the area around his hometown of Newburyport, Massachusetts. His pictures were distributed mostly to local residents through a Newburyport merchant, so, not surprisingly, his photographs are very rare today, although some of his stereoviews can be found in the online collection of the New York Public Library (Fig. 1). Bill had obtained a cache of Coombs's original photographs, negatives, family photo albums, and personal letters to his family, which had been handed down through several generations of family members. In some of the letters, he found references to John Fallon's Stereopticon. Philip Coombs went on tour with the Stereopticon, mostly through towns and cities in Massachusetts and Maine, at the behest of John Fallon, who was too busy with his work at Pacific Mills in Lawrence to take his Stereopticon on the road himself (Fig. 2). In researching Fallon's Stereopticon, Bill came across a reference to my 2011 article in *The Magic Lantern Gazette* through my Zotero Magic Lantern Research Group and contacted me for a copy of the article.[1]

Bill had written up his research as a short book, which currently can be accessed as a Kindle book through Amazon, with the intriguing title, *1861: An Early Wet Plate Photojournalist Covers Newburyport—and Captures EMILY DICKINSON's TERROR*. His book includes a brief history of the short life of Philip Coombs (he died at age 24), his photographs of the Newburyport region, and his involvement with Fallon's Stereopticon. It also includes what appear to be previously unknown photographs by Coombs of poet Emily Dickinson, for whom only one photograph is known. Readers

Fig. 1. Group picnic, Newburyport, Massachusetts, 1861. Photo by Philip Coombs. New York Public Library.

can download his Kindle book for more details of that fascinating story.

I persuaded Bill to let me edit part of his book as an article for the *Gazette*, focusing on the relationship of Coombs to Fallon's Stereopticon, and his article follows this brief introduction. His research sheds new light on the role of Rev. J. C. Fletcher, who was mentioned in my previous article as an occasional lecturer for Fallon's exhibitions. Even more exciting, Bill found among the photographs that had belonged to Coombs a wonderful image of J. C. Fletcher as a young man in the 1860s (see the following article). It also turns out that another minister from Newburyport, John Pearson, sometimes narrated the slides for Fallon's Stereopticon exhibitions when Fletcher was unavailable, although Coombs stated that he was not quite up to the task. So here we have two entirely new "stereopticon men"—Coombs and Pearson—whom I had not uncovered in my own research, and more information on a third, Rev. J. C. Fletcher. Bill's research also fills in some additional venues for Fallon's Stereopticon in 1862, including shows in Lawrence, Newburyport, New Bedford, Taunton, Charlestown, Cambridge, Danvers, Fall River, and Worcester, Massachusetts, and Providence, Rhode Island.

Bill's sources for his story of Philip Coombs are mainly personal letters and articles from the Newburyport newspaper, which are cited in his text. I have added some "Editor's Notes" at the end of his article to provide additional historical context and to identify some of the individuals mentioned in the text. Except for a few transitional sentences and some

Fig. 2. Photograph of Philip Coombs taken in 1862 during his tour with Fallon's Stereopticon in Portland, Maine. Courtesy of Bill Bollman.

minor editing, all of the writing in the following article is Bill's.

Bill Bollman's chance discovery of my article on John Fallon, and my subsequent discovery of his independent research on the subject, illustrates the role of serendipity in historical research. Except for a letter that Philip Coombs wrote to his hometown newspaper that mentions John Fallon, there was no published evidence of his involvement with the Stereopticon. In addition, it was pure chance that led family members to preserve Coombs's photographs and letters for several generations, and another stroke of good luck that enabled Bill to acquire this cache of valuable material. The process of uncovering the history of magic lanterns and stereopticons, and other visual media, is often compared to archaeology, with bits and pieces of the story excavated from diverse sources; there is no narrative history of Fallon's Stereopticon or most other 19th century visual entertainments.[2] Bill Bollman's article that follows fills in important missing pieces of the story.

Notes and References

1. Kentwood D. Wells. 2011. The stereopticon men: on the road with John Fallon's Stereopticon, 1860-1870. *The Magic Lantern Gazette* 23 (3):2-35.

2. Erkki Huhtamo and Jussi Parikka. 2011. *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications.* University of California Press, Berkeley.

The Magic Lantern Society of the United States and Canada

Announces Its Second

$500 Student Essay Award

The Magic Lantern Society of the United States and Canada is pleased announce its second Student Essay Award. The award has been created to invite the participation of young scholars, archivists and artists in research on the magic lantern. We welcome submissions related to the culture, practice, and study of the lantern, from the 1600s to the present, anywhere in the world, but especially in America, or Canada.

Entrants must be enrolled in a college or university academic program (undergraduate or graduate) at the time of submission. Students may submit essays originally written for academic courses, but may not submit anything previously published in print or online. Submissions should be written in English and should not exceed 5,000 words. All submissions are due electronically by **April 1, 2013.**

A committee of the Society will select the winner. The award, which consists of a monetary prize of US $500, will be announced on June 1, 2013, and the essay will be published soon thereafter in *The Magic Lantern Gazette*, the Society's print and on-line research journal. The winner will also be invited to make a presentation at the next convention of the Society, to be held in Boston in 2014.

Please send your submissions (in Microsoft Word format) to the editor of *The Magic Lantern Gazette*:

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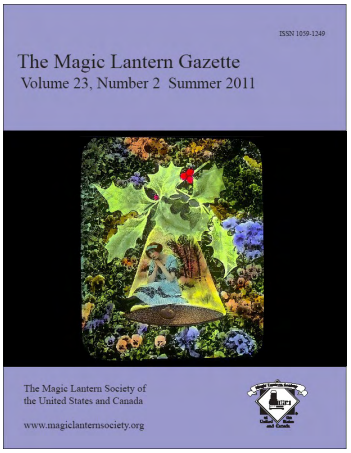
For more information about the Society, please visit www.magiclanternsociety.org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The first Student Essay Award was presented at the 2012 convention in Tacoma, Washington to **Esther Morgan-Ellis** of Yale University for her cover article in the Summer 2011 issue of the *Gazette*, entitled **Nostalgia, Sentiment, and Cynicism in Images of "After the Ball"**

Philip Coombs, Rev. J. C. Fletcher, and John Fallon's Stereopticon

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Philip Coombs was born in 1840 and grew up at 5 Pond Street in Newburyport, Massachusetts, along with his parents (Abby and John), brothers (Charles "Ned" and Willie), and sisters (Lillie and Lucinda). Philip's hometown is an old maritime community with a rich history. The town is near the mouth of the Merrimack River, 35 miles north of Boston. Benjamin Franklin visited in 1754 and studied the effects of lightning which struck the steeple of the old meeting house. Its people played an important role in the American Revolution, and the town prospered as an early mercantile and shipbuilding area. By the 1860s, cotton manufacturing had become important to the town of 12,000 citizens, after construction of five steam-powered cotton mills had revitalized the economy in the 1840s and early 1850s, but the country was suffering a severe recession after the financial panic of 1857.[1]

It is in this recession that we first hear from Philip in letter to his family, just as he got laid off from his job at the local photography shop of J. A. McArthur[2], and was about to take advantage of an opportunity he was offered to sail on a trip to the West Indies, including St. Thomas.

> *Newburyport*
> *Dec. 10th, 1858*
>
> *My Dear Father*
>
> *Last Saturday I received my discharge from McArthur* [photography shop]*, business being so dull he could not keep me, so he said. I was not sorry to leave him, but was very sorry to lose the $8 per week. Since then I have received an invitation from a party in Boston to go to the West Indies on a prospecting expedition. They take their instruments with them and have a fine prospect in view. They charter a vessel of nearly one hundred tuns and start Tuesday of next week, to be gone during the hard times some two or three months. I have been to Boston and can find nothing to do, therefore I think that instead of loafing here this Winter it would be the best thing I can do. McArthur advises me to go & says he would go if he could leave his business. We have everything to make us comfortable and things look very encouraging. Wish I could see you before I go. I should have written you in relation to it before had I known it in time….*
>
> *I am as ever your affectionate son,*
> *Philip*

Philip did go on the expedition to the West Indies, sailing on the ship *Atlantic* through St. Thomas among other places, and returned to New York a few months later on April 14, 1859. By late 1860 Philip had finally found work in New York City, working for, and boarding with, Mr. Rumrill, a jeweler. While in New York, Philip attended a lecture on Brazil by Rev. J. C. Fletcher, a resident of Philip's hometown of Newburyport. In a letter to his father on November 25, 1860, Philip wrote: "Mr. Fletcher is giving lectures here on Brazil…. It's the same as he delivered in Newburyport I expect."

Rev. James Cooley Fletcher was a hugely popular minister and missionary. He was the eldest son of Calvin Fletcher, a well-known Indianapolis banker and one of the first settlers of Indiana. Fletcher graduated from Brown University in 1846, studied theology for two years, completing his studies in Europe to improve his French to become a missionary in Haiti. In 1850, he married Henrietta Malan, the daughter of Cesar Malan, a minister from Geneva, and they had two children: Edward, and Julia Constance. He returned to the United States in 1850, only to leave again 1851-1854 on a mission in Rio de Janeiro. He briefly returned to the United States, but went back to travel throughout Brazil in 1855 and 1856 as an agent of the American Sunday School Union. In 1857 he published the first of at least nine editions of his seminal book, *Brazil and the Brazilians Portrayed in Historical and Descriptive Sketches*. Philip would become better acquainted with Rev. Fletcher a few years later, when they joined forces to exhibit John Fallon's Stereopticon in towns throughout New England.

In the meantime, there was a war on, and like many northerners, Philip rallied to the defense of the Union. He enlisted on April 26, 1861 as a private in the New York Infantry (Fig. 1). He went with his regiment to defend Washington, D.C. at the start of the war. Enlistments

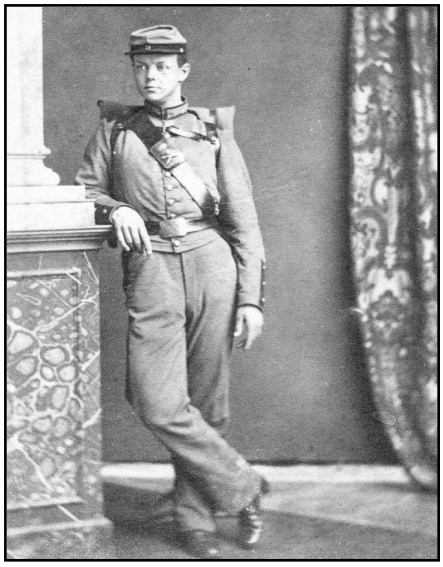


Fig. 1. Philip Coombs, March 1861. Courtesy of Bill Bollman.

were relatively short at the beginning of the war, and Philip was discharged with his company on June 3, 1861, and within the month, he traveled back to Newburyport. During his stay in Newburyport for the next nine months, Philip took up photography, taking stereographic pictures of local people and scenery. Photographs were not at all easy to make in 1861. There were no film cartridges, and stores didn't sell film. Philip tells of a 'good day' when he made three "successful" photos after a long day's work. Philip made his photos using the wet plate collodion process. Wet plate collodion photography was invented in 1851 and came to dominate the art of photography from around 1860 until nearly the end of the century. When taking photos, Philip would set and focus his camera. Then, in the field, he poured a solution made of collodion (nitrated cotton), ether, alcohol, and bromide and iodide salts evenly over the surface of a pre-cut glass plate. Once it gelled, in 15 seconds or so, he immediately plunged it into an upright bath of silver nitrate to become sensitized. After 3 to 4 minutes, while still wet, he removed the coated glass plate from the silver bath, loaded it in a plate holder, and took it to his previously-focused camera to make an exposure. After exposure, Philip took the glass plate to a darkroom (or portable dark tent) for processing. The entire processing operation had to be completed in 10-15 minutes or the glass plate would have dried out and become unusable. In the darkroom he developed the glass plate with a ferrous sulfate solution, then washed and plunged it into a fixer bath of cyanide or sodium thiosulphate to chemically remove the unexposed silver crystals. There is no grain in a wet collodion plate image, so details of the image (if it stayed perfectly still during the lengthy exposure) can be incredibly sharp.

Philip's photographs were taken in stereo, producing side-by-side left and right images. The first stereo viewer was patented in 1838 by Sir Charles Wheatstone, but his was a complicated and expensive apparatus including mirrors and prisms. Philip was on the leading edge of a popularity craze of stereoviews just beginning to emerge in 1861, generated by the development of an inexpensive, hand held stereoscope invented by Oliver Wendell Holmes and perfected by Joseph L. Bates of Boston. Philip focused his photographic efforts on the area in and around Newburyport. Essentially he became a sort of local photojournalist, although newspapers at the time did not publish photographs.[3] Instead, Philip's stereoviews were sold to local residents through the Newburyport jewelry store of Robert E. Mosely. When new views were ready, they were announced and described in detail in the local newspaper:

Newburyport Daily Herald, August 9, 1861:

> NEWBURYPORT AND ITS ENVIRONS.— Citizens and strangers, poets and writers of prose, have talked and sung and written praises of the scenery in the vicinity of this city. Travelers have said that in the neighborhood of no American town do they find the rural beauty of England so beautifully reproduced as around Newburyport. For years we have gone over the same roads, climbed the gently swelling undulations, looked upon the same blue river, the same distant hills, and the same ocean-rim, and we can say that the sight is always refreshing to our eyes, beauty is always imprinted on our heart, and every scene is ever varied and never fatiguing. We believe that no city in the United States, of the size of Newburyport, has her sons so widely scattered. Old Newbury, West Newbury and Newburyport have their representatives on the slopes of the Sierra Nevada, among the icebergs of Labrador, among the Andes of South America, upon the ocean gems of the Caribbean sea and the Gulf of Mexico on the hot shores of Africa, upon the continent of Europe, in the great marts of commerce in India and China, in the isles of the Pacific – indeed wherever civilized man is to be found, there will you find some boy who was born in Joppa, Oldtown, or the thrown up ridge of Newburyport. How dear to them are the recollections of home, and what visions of those distant lands do they have of the haunts of their boyhood! What would they give to have transported to them the scenes which the dwellers at home look upon every day with renewed delight!
>
> We have been led to these reflections by gazing upon a set of stereoscopic views of "Newburyport and its Environs," just taken by Mr. P. COOMBS, of this city. We have recently been struck with the great improvements made

in our various photographic establishments in town. We have been particularly astonished at the progress made in stereoscopic photography, whether for portraits or landscapes, and we might instance the stereoscopic likeness of a little daughter of E.S. Moseley, Esq., taken by Mr. McArthur, as equal to anything that comes to us from England or France. But we have now to do with "Newburyport and its Environs." Mr. Coombs has happily hit upon the idea of taking a series of views of the prettiest landscapes, the most remarkable private dwellings and churches, and those spots hallowed by childhood's recollections, and has illustrated the most of them with lines from Whittier, who has done so much to describe the beautiful scenery of our environs. The first six of the series are issued this morning, at the jewelry establishment of Mr. Robert E. Mosely. The first is the Four Rock bridge, an Oldtown favorite bathing place of Newburyport boys. There is the old bridge, the calm water, and in order that all may be in perfect keeping, there are the boys too – some swimming and some loafing lazily on the bridge. In the back ground the trees stand out in fine relief. Let a Newburyporter in Calcutta, or Valparaiso, or San Francisco, look on the beautiful stereoscopic view, without feeling the lines of Whittier, which are printed upon the back, to be the sentiment of his heart:

"Old dreams come thronging back again,
And boyhood lives again in me."

"Twilight on the Artichoke" is the title of the next exquisite picture (Fig. 2).

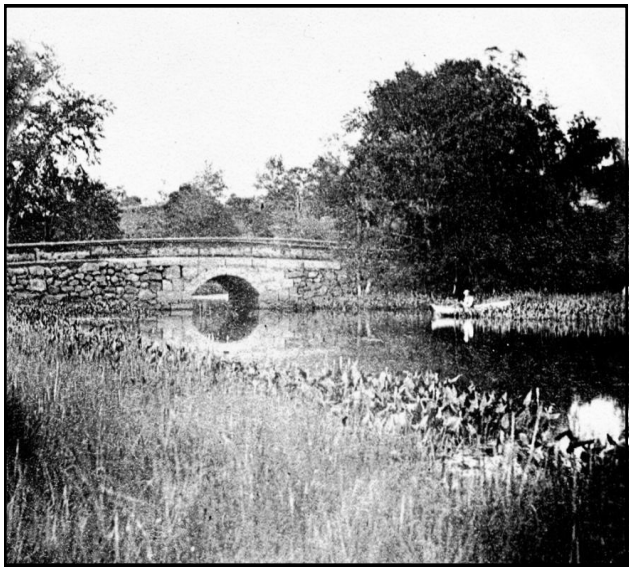


Fig. 2. Twilight on the Artichoke. Boundary between Newburyport and West Newbury, 1861. Photo by Philip Coombs. Courtesy of Bill Bollman.

The last rays of the sun peeping through the foliage and reflected upon the tranquil water give a fine effect to the darkening trees and the shadowed arch of the stone bridge. This view will be deemed by artists a perfection, and will draw more than one peripatetic knight of the pencil to look upon the real scene so faithfully rendered by photography. Whittier again comes most appropriately to our aid;

"What more than Artichoke the rill of Helicon."

Now turn we to "our river," the lordly Merrimac. —What a fine view we have of its utilized expanse before our city. Mr. Coombs has taken this view from the railroad bridge, and the hundreds of Newburyport sons upon the ocean will value this picture most highly. It is entitled the Harbor of Newburyport. In the foreground is the schooner *Alliance* floating on the descending tide; and we aver that we never saw a hull of a vessel and the delicate depiction of minute rigging so exactly reproduced as here (Fig. 3). In the middle ground the shipping, wharves and warehouses, while in the distance loom the sand hills of Plum Island. Coming into the city we take a position on our beautiful High street near Green, and glance across the Mall where reposes the Court House. This is what a photographer would call "finely cut," for the branches of the shade trees and the lace-like tracery of leaves are given in a wonderful manner.

Fig. 3. Newburyport Harbor, stereoview by Philip Coombs. New York Public Library.

Number 5 will attract the attention of the sons of West Newbury, and every lover of the beautiful, and of historical association. It is entitled "West Newbury from Pipe Stave Hill." This is the view spoken of by Brissot, the Girondist leader, when on this spot he visited Hon. Mr. Dalton in 1787, and said it was the finest that could be imagined.

> The waving field of corn in the foreground, the neat dwellings and dark grove of trees in the middle distance, and the church and fading hills beyond, present a most agreeable whole, which is fitly described by Whittier:--
>
> *"And sweet homes nestle in these dales,*
> *And perch along these wooded swells;*
> *And blest beyond Arcadian vales,*
> *They hear the sound of Sabbath bells."*
>
> Number 6 will be a great favorite. It is called "Curson's Mills," and is the view looking across the mirror-like stream, whose borders are the graceful overhanging trees. This is a scene of great beauty, a quiet loveliness pervades every part of it, even to the floating pond lilies and the suspended oar of the rower of the little boat which nestles on the bosom of the water. In the very nick of time again comes in our sweet Quaker poet [John Greenleaf Whittier]:
>
> *"Thanks for your graceful oars which broke*
> *The morning dreams of Artichoke,*
> *Along his wooded shore."*
>
> But enough for today, for if we do not check ourselves we shall expatiate in many columns on the beauties of our scenery. We shall notice each set of these pictures as they appear. We are glad to learn that Mr. Coombs prepares one set on thin paper, so that the views may be sent in letters to Europe, India, China, and South America.

With his growing interest in photography, it is not surprising that Philip was immediately fascinated by a new photographic attraction that appeared in the Newburyport area in 1862. This was the Stereopticon, owned by John Fallon, a chemist at Pacific Mills in Lawrence, Massachusetts. Fallon first introduced his Stereopticon at Concert Hall in Philadelphia on December 22, 1860, showing images from Europe and North America. No lecturer was used at first in Philadelphia, but it became more organized and by the end of 1861 word was out about the potential of the stereopticon. From Philadelphia, the Stereopticon traveled to Boston, where it was exhibited for many weeks.[4] Philip Coombs, at home in Newburyport in the cold New England winter of early 1862, reading his daily copy of the *Newburyport Herald*, first heard about the Stereopticon when he ran across the following article:

Newburyport Daily Herald, February 28, 1862:

> EUROPE BROUGHT TO OUR DOOR.—Several weeks ago Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes was showing me some fine stereoscopic views, which he always has in his cozy little study, and incidentally mentioned to me that a gentleman at Lawrence had an optical instrument, by which a stereoscopic group, or a statue could be made to assume the size of life.[5] I had before heard of this same wonderful instrument, which would take a glass stereoscopic view, and present the landscape in all the realities of nature, so that a thousand people might view it at the same time. I had further heard that Professor Park, at Andover, had expressed his enthusiastic admiration of the effects produced upon him, by saying that the Venus de Medici and the Apollo Belvidere reproduced by this instrument, were even more satisfactory than when he looked upon the original.[6] Such men give no injudicious praise; but I determined to see for myself. I went over to Lawrence, and found that an English gentleman (Mr. Fallon) of scientific tastes and practicability of the great print works of the Pacific Mills, had, in his love for optics, accumulated some five hundred glass stereoscopic views—a greater number than any other person in our country—and, conceiving the idea that they might be enlarged (so that the celebrated scenes of earth might be presented with satisfaction to the eye without straining the weakest vision), he sent to London and had powerful lenses constructed and other apparatus (costing $2000.) After a careful and tolling experiment he has achieved a complete triumph. Mr. Fallon deserves the high encomiums which have been bestowed upon his endeavors and success.
>
> Last week, and the week before, I had the pleasure of witnessing two exhibitions of this truly wonderful optical instrument before an audience of more than a thousand, and I have never heard so much satisfaction expressed. After one hour and a half of travelling by the aid of a Drummond light and this stereopticon (as it is fitly termed) through England, France, Italy, Rhine land, Egypt, Asia Miner, and America, the audience unfatigued seemed loath to leave the house. I could look upon foreign cities and scenes which I know as well as Newburyport, and felt transported back again to London, Paris, Cologne, Rome and Naples, to the castled Rhine, the sublimities of the Alps, the glories of Chamouny, the steep sides of Vesuvius, the graceful shores of the Mediterranean. You may have an idea of the powerful optical illusion when I tell you that the full moon so successfully photographed by Mr. Whipple of Boston, is magnified from one inch to *thirty feet*, with plains, mountains, continents and peninsulas, laid before you with greater satisfaction than by the telescope.[7] Mr. Fallon has, by his exhibition of the stereopticon in Lawrence, sided charitable objects to the amount of a thousand dollars, and his last effort was to give $300 to

> the City Mission of Lawrence. I believe that it has only been exhibited in Boston, Philadelphia and few other places. Why can we not have it here? Our citizens of all classes-our scholars of the advanced schools-all will be entertained and instructed in the most satisfactory manner. We shall carry something of worth away from such an exhibition, besides enjoying momentary pleasurable emotions, which are of great importance in this fleet life of ours.

As soon as Philip read that story in the *Herald*, he traveled to Lawrence, met with John Fallon and saw his Stereopticon, and the next day wrote of its wonders in a letter to the Editor of the *Herald*:

Newburyport Daily Herald, March 1, 1862:

> Mr. Editor:
>
> I read with pleasure the account published yesterday of that wonderful instrument, the stereopticon, which deserves to be called the invention of John Fallon, Esq., formerly of Manchester, England, but now of Lawrence, Mass. I made a journey to Lawrence for the purpose of seeing this instrument, and permit me as a practical photographer to say, that I never have seen such wonderful effects. Those who have been delighted with home and foreign scenes as viewed through the ordinary stereoscope, will behold a view thrown upon a large screen, the same accuracy and the same beauty of detail, only magnified a thousand fold-so that every one in a building as large as our City Hall may see it clearly and satisfactory from the remotest parts of the Hall. So accurate is the delineation and perspective that a street, a bridge, a palace seems to stretch before you, inviting you to enter. Not having seen the original of the views of the old world I can only say that they are most beautiful; but of the scenes in our own country I can testify to their exactness to nature. The statuary cannot fail to please one better than even the originals in hard marble. I can earnestly join in wishing that Newburyporters may have the opportunity of seeing the various interesting views as displayed by the stereopticon.—Philip Coombs

Rev. J.C. Fletcher and other leaders in Newburyport took their cue from Philip and also wrote to John Fallon, inventor of the stereopticon, hoping to persuade him to bring the device to Newburyport:

> *Newburyport*
> *March 1, 1862*
> *To JOHN FALLON, Esq., Lawrence, Mass.:*
>
> *Dear Sir—*
>
> *We have heard from various sources, of your wonderful Stereopticon, whereby the most interesting scenes of the old world and the new can be magnified and brought faithfully before the eye. We feel (and we believe that hundreds of our citizens would join us in what we say) that an exhibition of the stereopticon in Newburyport would not only be the means of entertainment and instruction to our adult population, but that our children and youth would be especially benefited by viewing scenes of historical interest taken in England, Scotland, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Greece, Egypt, and Asia Minor. We therefore request that you would come to our city, and thus gratify and instruct us, on such evening as you may name.*
>
> *Hoping to hear from you immediately, we remain, Dear Sir, very respectfully, yours,*
>
> *Leonard Withington E.C. Hooker E.F. Stone*
> *A.W. Miltimore H.C. Perkins W.W. Caldwell*
> *William Horton E.S. Williams A .B. Mussey*
> *Wm.C. Todd David Wood Jas. Cruickshanks*
> *S.J. Spalding Albert Currier E.S. Moseley*
> *J.C. Fletcher A.G. Vermilye*

Obviously flattered by the attention, John Fallon agreed to allow his unique Stereopticon to be brought to Newburyport. Fallon himself didn't travel with the stereopticon, citing the needs of his job in Lawrence as Superintendent of the Print Works, so he specifically asked that Rev. J. C. Fletcher provide an explanatory lecture for the show, which he agreed to do.

Newburyport Daily Herald, March 3, 1861:

> THE STEREOPTICON. Since the publication of the communication of [the Editor,] we learn that Mr. Fallon was lavished before the Peabody Institute, Danvers, to give two exhibitions of this gigantic and wonderful instrument—wonderful in its beautiful and sublime effects. The exhibition took place on Friday and Wednesday to large and appreciative audiences. Last week and the week before, says our letter from Lawrence, Mr. Fallon exhibited the Stereopticon five times, and the aggregate number of persons was nearly five thousand. The citizens of Lawrence have presented Mr. Fallon a fine testimonial. He has since been lavished in Charlestown, and it will be seen that he will be in this city on Thursday.

Mr. Fallon has signified by telegraph that he will send over the stereopticon for Thursday night, when our citizens will have one of the greatest treats that they have enjoyed in a long while. Mr. Fallon has requested Rev. J. C. Fletcher to give the running description of the various scenes, and which Mr. Fletcher has consented to do (Fig. 4).

THE STEREOPTICON,

BELONGING TO JOHN FALLON, Esq.,

Superintendent of the Print Works, Lawrence, Mass.,

WILL BE EXHIBITED

—AT THE—

CITY HALL,

Thursday Evening, March 6th, '62,

☞ By this wonderful Instrument Views of Cities, Celebrated Cathedrals, the Ruins of Greece, Rome and Egypt, the most renowned Classic and Modern Statuary, Portraits of eminent Living Personages, the Mountain Scenery of Switzerland and noted places in our own land, all photographed on the spot, are, each one, displayed with the marvelous exactness of nature upon Six Hundred Square Feet of Illuminated Canvass, so that 1000 or 10,000 persons may gaze upon them at the same time.

GREAT BRITAIN, FRANCE, ITALY, SWITZERLAND and the HOLY LAND, are represented by scenes of intrinsic or historic interest.

THE FULL MOON, photographed by Whipple, of Boston, is re-produced by the Stereopticon, with marvellous effect

By request, Rev J. C. FLETCHER, of this city, will give the descriptions of the various scenes

Single tickets 25 cents; five tickets $1; children under 13 years of age, accompanied by parents or relatives, 10 cents; tickets for sale by R. E. Moseley and W. W. Caldwell, State street.

There will also be appropriate Music. mr3

Fig. 4. Advertisement for Fallon's Stereopticon, *Newburyport Daily Herald,* March 3, 1862.

Newburyport Daily Herald, March 6, 1862:

> STEREOPTICON may be deemed a high-sounding term, but is designed to please and instruct. The signification is very simple and obvious. It differs but little in meaning from stereoscope, which is derived from the Greek words stereos, signifying solid, round, perfect in symmetry, and scope, the whole signifying to see things in their round and solid form. The stereoscope, then, is so called because it presents the objects of a picture in their true perspective with roundness, solidity and distance. This instrument is kept constantly on hand for exhibition at Mr. Moseley's store and at Lamb's Ambrotype and Photograph rooms, displaying some of the most beautiful views in the city; also scenes in foreign lands, in all the truth and loveliness of reality. In this we behold the most remarkable scenes and the most renowned places in all the world, as perfectly developed as if they were suddenly spread out before us in all the perfection of life. Who that has visited Mr. Lamb's Picture rooms has not gazed with admiration upon the "Falls of Niagara," the "Flume Passage, in the White Mountains," the Tip Top House, or the Katerskill Falls? Or what exile of Green Erin has not looked with inexpressible delight upon the old ivy mantled Castles of "Ross" and "Blarney," and other sacred haunts of that sea-girt Isle? Or who has ever seen "Winter Castle," or the "Luxembourg," or "Place Royale," or the famous old city of "Toledo," with the mighty domes of its Aleaga and Cathedral rising heavenward, has not turned from them with reluctance? And yet these are presented on a small scale compared with the stereopticon views. This catches up the little images of the stereoscope and enlarges them to the full proportions of life, and makes the spectator feel that he is borne to the very threshold of the reality. But they are much better seen than described. So go tonight and see for yourself. If you have an opera glass or a small spy-glass, so much the better.

Newburyport Daily Herald, March 7, 1862:

> EXHIBITION OF THE STEREOPTICON REPEATED, with entire change of programme, takes place to-night. Owing to the unexpected success of last night, the gentlemen who have the matter in hand, announced through Rev. Mr. Fletcher, another exhibition, in order that numbers who were prevented last night from attending, as well as those who had a feast of enjoyment, may have another opportunity of travelling over "mighty seas and continents wide." In fact, the tickets had to be limited yesterday, for as was stated last night, before noon five hundred had been disposed of. The audience was one of the largest, most fashionable and appreciative, that has recently assembled in this city.
>
> As we have intimated, there will be an entire change of programme. We shall loop upon the British Parliament, houses where John Bull mutters his oratorical thunder and governs his vast empire—the throne room of England's Queen—the ruined glories of Melrose Abbey—the rural beauties of Allan water—the Menail Suspension Bridge, &c. Passing to the continent we gaze upon the Tuilleries—the Alhambra—the Sublimities of Switzerland—the lone Temples of Paestum (to which Dr. Kirk so eloquently alluded in his dedicatory sermon at the North Church.)—the Lake of

> of Come—the Coliseum, and the Cathedral of St. Peters on Easter day (in which are thousands of soldiers and people receiving the benediction of the Pope whose robed form can be seen in the balcony above the great cantral entrance.) Egypt will exhibit more of her famous temples—Venice, "pride of the sea," will show us her Rialto, her St. Mark's Palace, &c. Cologne will present us the doorway of her magnificent Cathedral. We shall have new American views, and as to the Statuary every one who looked at the "Victory," the Venus de Medicis, Sabrina and Eve last night will wish to see the Apollo Belvidere, the "Veiled Statue" (exceedingly curious) and Lady Godiva. One landscape we must particularize. It is the view of "Bingen-Fair Bin, en on the Rhine"…. We will mention as a decided attraction to the entertainment last night was Mr. Morrison's performance on the organ. This evening he will favor us with more of the national airs of the old and New World.
>
> We have been informed that Mr. Coombs has succeeded in taking a local view on glass, and perhaps will allow it to be exhibited.

Mr. Fallon would entrust his one-and-only Stereopticon to Philip Coombs to take it on tour through New England for several months in 1862. J. C. Fletcher was so good as moderator that Fallon hired him to go on tour with the Stereopticon and continue to give explanatory lectures, and Mr. A. Weldon from Newburyport was brought along to handle mechanical issues. From newspaper articles, and from Philip Coombs's letters home, we also learn that Rev. John Pearson of Newburyport sometimes provided a narrative for the slides when Rev. Fletcher was not available.[8] Their stereopticon tour started at the Melodeon in Boston, where it was instantly so successful that the show was held over for more than two weeks, with shows every day, plus matinees on Wednesday and Saturday.

The Boston Daily Journal Evening Edition, May 10, 1862:

> THE STEREOPTICON IN MASSACHUSETTS AND MAINE. The stereopticon belonging to John Fallon, Esq., of Lawrence, would now need no commendation to the Boston public as one of the greatest triumphs of science and art, and as a means of instruction and pure entertainment. But as it has now left Boston, we wish to give a testimony which is richly deserved. For fifteen nights in succession it was exhibited for the benefit of the Sanitary Commission, in the Melodeon, and there was but one opinion from the thousands who witnessed the finest landscapes in the world, the first works of art of ancient and modern times, and those scenes hallowed by sacred or historic association. It is not often that we can chronicle a public entertainment which, while in Boston and vicinity, has attracted such men as Longfellow, Hillard and Whittier; Prof. Agassiz; Tuttle, the astronomer; Alvan Clarke, the optician; Dexter, the sculptor; Bradford, the first American marine painter; and many others prominent in their professions.[9] The opinions of such men as Rev. Dr. Ellis of Charlestown, and the written testimonials of Professors Park and Stow of Andover, all bear upon the interest and usefulness of the stereopticon.[10] The proprietor, whose responsible duties as superintendent of the Print Works, Pacific Mills, do not permit him to travel with this new and interesting invention, (and which he originally obtained for his own pleasure), has entrusted to careful hands this entertaining means of education. Rev. J. Pearson of Newburyport has long been known to his ministerial brethren of that vicinity as one of the most thorough students of Biblical history, and the same thoroughness he has applied to the study of the hundreds of scenes in Mr. Fallon's collection.
>
> The greatest satisfaction arises, in this exhibition, from the fact that one thousand or ten thousand persons may gaze at the same time upon life-like scenes, not of man's art, but of the Creator's own painting. We congratulate our readers in Fall River, Providence, Worcester, Springfield, Portsmouth, Portland, Brunswick, Bath, Augusta, and Bangor, that they are to have the great enjoyment which Boston and vicinity have had for so long a time.
>
> The stereopticon is now exhibiting in New Bedford, where it will remain two days longer, and will open on Wednesday in Taunton.

After the Stereopticon left Boston, it traveled to several other cities in Massachusetts, as described in a letter Philip Coombs wrote to his father:

> *Parker House*
> *New Bedford*
> *May 11th, 1862*
>
> *Dear Father*
>
> *This afternoon I do not go to church but stay at home and rest a little. When I left you I think we were in Boston. From there we moved to Cambridge, where we were very successful in having full houses. But as we had only so much, it did not make much difference to us. Wednesday evening we exhibited in Cambridge.*

After the exhibition we packed up, got to bed about one, up again at 6, and at twenty-five minutes past seven, we are on our way to New Bedford on the Providence Rail Road. Our goods were not in Liberty Hall until 11 o'clock, and before six, everything was up, gas made, and all ready to show, but I assure you it was hard work and glad was I when it was done. In Cambridge resides Mr. Dexter the celebrated sculptor. While there he attended our exhibitions, became acquainted with Mr. Fletcher, who went to his house and saw some of his works. Mr. Fletcher was perfectly delighted with his marbles. I was introduced to Mr. Dexter, who with Mr. Fletcher desired to photograph some of his statues for the Stereopticon. It is now Wednesday evening. Tomorrow, Thursday, I can do it for I am going to Newbury so I leave my instruments in Cambridge. And after working so hard Thursday. I leave New Bedford on the 7:10 train for Boston. I get to Cambridge at 11, and at Mr. Dexter's studio I took 3 negatives of some very pretty pieces of statuary. I was very fortunate in getting so good a light in there. Mr. Pearson's descriptions will be very fine. He saw the originals. I dined at Mr. Dexter's, and had a good time generally. At half past four, I left Boston for Newbury. We have had very good audiences here, and shall continue tomorrow and the next day.

Henry Dexter's works that Philip photographed that day included *"The First Lesson"* (1848), which they described in the stereopticon shows as a little fellow frowning over a book, endeavoring to tell A from B. It was actually a portrait-statue of John P. Cushing's daughter. Philip also photographed "The Young Naturalist" (1848), described in the stereopticon shows as a picturesque statue of a little fellow represented leaning over a pet squirrel. This statue was a portrait-statue of John P. Cushing's son.

Philip's letter to his father continued:

This morning I went to the Friends meeting, and saw ladies on one side, gents on the other, with a board partition between. I was much amused at their way of doing things. Mr. Fletcher spoke among others. At 6 this PM I took tea at Mr. Howlands, the brother of the mayor. New Bedford is quite a pretty place, covers a great deal of ground and the people are quite affable. When I left you in Newburyport, I had quite a time just in season to get the cars, and that was all evening. I have seen Mrs. Fletcher this evening. She said she saw Sissie at the depot.

Did you read the piece in the Boston Journal of last Evening? It is very good. I think from the Journal you will learn our future route. Mr. Pearson seems quite energetic and I think he will succeed. But adieu, much love to all. I haven't heard from home for some time. Write me at Taunton.

Affectionately, Your son, Phil

Although Philip had praised the energy of Rev. Pearson as a narrator of the Stereopticon slides in his May 11 letter to his father, he was considerably less enthusiastic two weeks later, suggesting that Mr. Pearson was a poor substitute for Rev. Fletcher:

Aldrich House
Providence, RI
May 25th, 1862

Dear Father

*With much pleasure I received a letter from you and Mother. So you are into the "Spring cleaning?" and I guess it is pretty general for this house has been turned inside out, that is the furniture, and renovated entire. What splendid weather we are enjoying. It is really beautiful, but mostly too warm for the Stereopticon. You ask in relation to Mr. Pearson. I will tell you (confidentially) he isn't the man for the place. He can't talk, and what little he says is too ministerial like. He is repelling rather than inviting. It is a great exertion for him to labor so much. It has made him sick already. I really pity him. Since we have been under his administration we have hardly met our expenses. Mr. Fletcher is with us now, and has been since Friday. At once you could see the difference. He is the only man I know of to fill the place. In Taunton we worked very hard and received nothing for it. We even had to pay our board. You ought to hear Weldon talk. He is a great one. I have an argument with him every day. He's a perfect "John Bull," but we get along together very well. The Stereo**SCO**pticon* [a copycat competitor] *didn't succeed in Newburyport then?*[11] *I would enquire when will it succeed? They must have made a great failure. I am told that out of 100 tickets left at Mosely's, 9 only were sold – how different from the Stereopticon! I suppose their great aim is to get ahead of us, but not this time I guess. On Thursday evening we exhibit in Portland, we continue here until Tuesday. It is probable I shall be at home some portion of Wednesday. I have not enjoyed myself at all here, not because I have not been well for I am enjoying excellent health and living high.*

Mother anxiously enquires how I get my washing and mending done? My washing is done at the Hotel and mending I don't get done! Sometimes I tie the holes together. You can't tell how pleased I was when I read the Herald proposition. [Philip's father John Coombs was offered partial ownership in the *Newburyport Daily Herald*.] *I wanted some one to talk to about it, why, it will be first rate. Surely* [Uncle] *Coffin will aid you. You must have it. I want to ask lots of questions about it. Mr. Carr and all his family I invited to the Stereopticon. They were much pleased with the entertainment. He has a future "brewing." Doubtless he has written you in relation to it. I received a letter last evening from Mr. Fallon in which he thanked me for the letter received from you…. Bishop Clark has visited a* [stereopticon] *exhibition a number of times. He was in on Friday evening when Mr. Fletcher got him to say a few words. He spoke finely. He is very much pleased with it. Fletcher can get most any one to speak for the Stereopticon. See how he did in Charlestown…*

Sunday Evening

After writing the above I have received a letter from you from Mr. Fletcher. He had mislaid it and until now I did not get it. I am surprised Mr. Fallon thinks so much of me. I knew he had a good opinion of myself, but that is beyond my idea. I will try and merit it. He has several times informed me of matters that he would not allow [Mr. A.] Weldon to know. I certainly think he reposes a great deal of confidence in me. He is a fine man but be sure and destroy this sheet of paper when you have read it!

Good night, and pleasant dreams is the wish to you all.

Phil

On June 19, 1862, Rev. J. C. Fletcher (Fig. 5) sailed for Brazil, from New York, in the steamship *Constitution*, not to return for well over a year. While there, he met with the emperor of Brazil, who manifested the greatest interest in American literature and authors. They spoke about John Greenleaf Whittier and Longfellow, as well as of Mr. Everett, a gentleman well known to Fletcher. Rev. Fletcher then traveled 2,000 miles up the Amazon, and made a collection of rare objects in natural history for Professor Agassiz. The Stereopticon tour was not the same without Fletcher, and Philip soon left it to go back to the life he had before he helped launch the popularity of the stereopticon, though the trajectory that Philip helped set it on, continued unabated for decades.

Fig. 5. Carte de visite of Rev. J. C. Fletcher, found with Philip Coombs's possessions. Courtesy of Bill Bollmanb.

J. C. Fletcher returned to Newburyport in early 1864, and was successful in inducing the Brazilian government to join the United States in establishing a line of steamships between New York and Rio de Janeiro. He eventually settled down in Newburyport–but only for a few years. After the Civil War, in 1866, he built an imitation Gothic castle near Deer Island that he called Hawkswood (Fig. 6). But Fletcher grew no roots. He became U.S. consul to Portugal in 1869, and then a missionary at Naples, Italy, in 1873. He again returned to the United States in 1877, to his birth town of Indianapolis, Indiana. After further travels in Europe and the Middle East, he settled for the last years of his life in Los Angeles.[12] J. C. Fletcher's daughter, Julia Constance Fletcher, stayed in Italy and became a very successful novelist. She wrote nearly a dozen novels between 1877 and 1885 under the pen name of George Fleming, many of which can still be found in print today.

Fig. 6.

Hawkswood, the home built by J. C. Fletcher. Photo by H.P. MacIntosh. Courtesy of Scott Nason.

There are very few, if any, known photographs taken by Philip Coombs after J. C. Fletcher left Newburyport in the summer of 1862, thus ending his all-too-short photographer/ photojournalist career. Philip returned to his boarding house in New York City after the stereopticon tour, then rejoined the war effort with a 'situation' on a ship contracted by the U.S. Navy.

When Philip returned to port in New York he wrote an ominous letter to his Father:

New York
Sept. 18, 1862

Dear Father

Back again once more to New York. Arrived yesterday morning all in good health. Our rebel prisoners were taken to Fort Columbus, Governors Island. Some of them appeared happy in hopes of soon being liberated, others unhappy. The Steamer is being put in condition for a 2d similar trip. The Lunts appear highly satisfied with my doings, certainly they well may be. I cleared for them $192.00 above expenses. They have treated me in the right way, giving me some $50 for my transactions. It is expected we shall start again by Saturday on a trip in the same direction. In all probability I shall in future go on a salary with a percentage besides. Ultimately I am in hopes to get into the store? That will be a good position for me. I have come from their store on South La. where I found a Herald containing my 1st correspondence. I read it and think the 2d much better. I also found a letter for me from you. You will please write me immediately at 264 Broadway.

I am perfectly well, although they all tell me I am quite thin, yet fleshy enough. My duties have been quite arduous, and in a hot climate drew from me some of the extra beef.

Allow me to say a few words in my own praise. Capt. Lunt is a quick man. He says but little, and to passengers is not very companionable. I am not much better, but having whole charge I arranged matters as well as the circumstances would admit, made everything as pleasant as I could. When we neared New York, most all the passengers (cabin) came to me and said that "had I not been there they did not know what they should have done." This was very pleasing to me, wholly unexpected, and I liked this much, but I will close. Love to all.

Affectionately
Your Son, Philip

Philip certainly was quite thin. The war effort and his tireless work on the U. S. Navy transport steamer "George C. Collins" took its toll. Though he continued to work on the steamer at least until late 1863, by early 1864 he was forced to leave the ship and return home to Newburyport. On March 21, 1864, at the age of only 24, Philip Coombs died at home with his family. The cause of death was officially listed as an 'ailment of the heart.'

Editor's Notes

1. John J. Currier. 1906. *History of Newburyport, Mass. 1764-1905.* Published by the author, Newburyport, Massachusetts.

2. John A. McArthur ran a daguerreotype studio in Newburyport in the 1850s. The business was sold in 1863. Langdon's List of 19th & Early 20th Century Photographers (http://www.langdonroad.com/mctomi.htm).

3. Michael L. Carlebach. 1992. *The Origins of Photojournalism in America*. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, DC. This book discusses daguerreotypes, stereoviews, and newspaper engravings made from photographs as precursors of actual photojournalism.

4. Kentwood D. Wells. 2011. The stereopticon men: on the road with John Fallon's stereopticon, 1860-1870. *The Magic Lantern Gazette* 23 (3):2-35.

5. Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809-1894), physician, poet, and lecturer, and co-inventor of the most popular form of American stereoscope. Holmes was an enthusiastic supporter of Fallon's Stereopticon, and his favorable comments were often featured in publicity for the Stereopticon (see Wells, 2011, The stereopticon men [note 4]).

6. Edwards Amasa Park (1808-1900) was a leading theologian and orator who taught at Andover Theological Seminary. Professor Park's favorable comments about the Stereopticon were featured in broadsides and other advertising for Fallon's exhibitions.

7. John Adams Whipple (1822-1891) was an early photographer and business partner of James W. Black of Boston. In 1851, he won an award at the Great Exhibition in London for his daguerreotype photographs of the moon taken with the Harvard telescope. Lantern slides of his moon photographs were commonly included in stereopticon shows by several different exhibitors in the 1860s. See: Sally Pierce. 1998. *Whipple and Black: Commercial Photographers in Boston*. Boston Athenaeum, Boston.

8. Rev. John Pearson, Jr. was pastor of the Advent Christian Church in Newburyport from 1848 to 1865. See: *History of Newburyport* (note 1), p. 303.

9. Among the Boston area intellectuals who attended showings of Fallon's Stereopticon, and frequently cited in broadsides and other advertising, were poets Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882) and John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892). Whittier seldom went to public events, but did attend one or more showings of the Stereopticon, perhaps urged to attend by his friend, Rev. J. C. Fletcher [see Wells, 2011, The stereopticon men (note 4)]. Also attending the Boston showing of the Stereopticon was George S. Hillard (1808-1879), lawyer, writer, and lecturer, and friend of Longfellow; Louis Agassiz (1807-1873), the leading American naturalist of the period; Horace Parnell Tuttle (1837-1923), American astronomer and discoverer of the "Great Comet" of 1860; Alvan Clark (1804-1887), portrait painter, engraver, astronomer, and manufacturer of telescopes; Henry Dexter (1806-1876), a Boston artist who specialized in portrait busts and sculptures; and William Bradford (1823-1892) a New Bedford artist who specialized in large-scale

marine paintings and scenes of the Arctic. Bradford's presence at the Stereopticon exhibition is particularly interesting, because he was greatly interested in photography and was known for the photographic realism of his paintings. In the 1860s, he organized seven summer excursions to Arctic regions of Canada and Greenland. In contrast to official exploring expeditions, these trips represented the beginning of Arctic tourism, with paying passengers going on the voyages. Starting in 1863, Bradford took along several different Boston photographers on these trips. These included J. L. Dunmore and George Critcherson, who were employed by the photographic studio of James W. Black. Photographs taken on these expeditions were used for reference in composing some of his Arctic paintings. In 1870, Bradford began a career as a stereopticon lecturer, using lantern slides of original photographs of the Arctic, as well as photographic reproductions of his own paintings. Throughout the 1870s, Bradford's stereopticon shows were in competition with Black's own stereopticon exhibitions that used some of the same images. These exhibitions were presented Black and Dunmore and credited Bradford as one of the photographers. At one of these exhibitions, the gas bags for the limelight stereopticon exploded, injuring both Black and Dunmore. Bradford's stereopticon lectures are described in Russell A. Potter, 2007, *Arctic Spectacles: The Frozen North in Visual Culture, 1818-1875* (University of Washington Press, Seattle), pp. 190-202. This book also includes an illustration of a broadside for Black's Arctic stereopticon exhibition (p. 198). See also: Frank Horch. 1973. Photographs and paintings by William Bradford. *American Art Journal* 5:61-70; Anne-Marie Amy Kikenny. 1994. "Life and Scenery in the Far North": William Bradford's 1885 lecture to the American Geographical Society. *American Art Journal* 26:106-108. Kikenny's article includes an illustration of a ticket to Bradford's lecture, "illustrated by stereopticon views" (p. 106).

10. In addition to Edwards Amasa Park (see note 6), clergymen attending Fallon's Stereopticon exhibition included Rev. George Edward Ellis (1814-1894), pastor of the Harvard Unitarian Church in Charlestown, Massachusetts, and Rev. Calvin Ellis Stowe (1802-1886), a professor at Andover Theological Seminary and husband of Harriet Beecher Stowe, the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

11. The term "stereoscopticon" was used briefly in the 1860s by several exhibitors, but then fell out of favor. Some lantern manufacturers, such as James Queen, also used the term for awhile. Fallon and his associates complained bitterly in several newspaper notices about imitators of his original stereopticon, some of which used the term stereoscopticon. See: Kentwood D. Wells. 2008. What's in a name? The magic lantern and the stereopticon in American periodicals 1860-1900. *The Magic Lantern Gazette* 20 (3):3-19.

12. Some aspects of Rev. J. C. Fletcher's career in Indianapolis and Los Angeles, including his lectures illustrated with stereopticon views, are described in Wells, 2011, The stereopticon men (see note 4).

William Bollman is the author of the "Vintage Photo Album Series™" of books. He collects antique personal photo albums having a focus on a given year and fascinating subject. His books in the series include one which explores a photo album from 1899 in the beach town where L. Frank Baum was drawing inspiration for his upcoming book "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz." Another from 1919 tells the story of a fellow learning to fly a "Jenny"—one of the first widely available airplanes. A PBS documentary will be aired this fall including Mr. Bollman's observations on this man's story. Another photo album that Mr. Bollman has collected is actually a wooden box full of original glass stereo slides, which through research, he was able to identify were taken before 1867 by Horace S. Tousley in the Ausable Chasm area of New York. His most recent book, from which this article has been extracted, is *1861: An Early Wet Plate Photojournalist Covers Newburyport—and Captures EMILY DICKINSON's TERROR* (Amazon Kindle edition, 2012).

THE MAGIC LANTHORN

ILLUSION is the lamp that memory burns;
Still on the faded pageant of the past,
Set with gay slides the painted lanthorn turns
With jewelled lights and changing colours cast—
The shadows shift, the lustres wax and wane
As the dim scene grows blurred or bright again.

Strange seasons rise, strange forests flower and fade,
Between the boles, along the dusky grass,
Threading the ancient marble colonnade
Rich-vestured shapes with eyes averted pass—
Or the long rays illumine autumn leas
With quiet waters and with golden trees.

As sunset spreads and furls its golden wings,
That radiance glows and pales on hollow and hill,
And the veiled ghosts that go like living things . . .
Still moves the wizard-litten masque—and still
Th' enchanted woods, the haunted meadows gleam
Faint as the storied arras of a dream.

Rosmund Marriott Watson, *After Sunset* (John Lane, New York, 1904), pp. 22-23.

Irenæus Letters.

HOLIDAY EVENINGS WITH THE LITTLE PEOPLE.

The children and the children's children come to the old homestead to keep the holidays. Their coming was heralded by a letter from one of the youngsters, saying: "We all expect to spend the holidays with our grandparents, just as it is in the story books."

Something must be done to entertain them, and I was appointed as committee of the whole to devise ways and means. During the day-time it would be easy to make them happy, as the city would be full of attractions, and if they found nothing more than the shop windows to see, these would amuse them for a week. But the long winter evenings would demand something lively and cheerful at home. All the old plays for children had been played out. It was required to produce something new. And that led me to Mr. Pike, the Optician.

Longer than I can remember "Pike, the Optician," has been celebrated in this city, and through the scientific circles of this country, as the importer and maker of scientific instruments, and especially of those for optical uses. The father of the present Mr. Pike, founded the house in 1804, and sold to my father the first air-pump ever imported for sale into this country. Previous to that time, if any public institution or private individual wished such an instrument, the order was sent abroad: but no dealer had as yet ventured to invest in an air-pump on his own account, and trusting to a call for its purchase. At length, about fifty years ago, Mr. Pike imported *one*, and had it for sale, and my father bought it. And well do I remember the astonishing experiments performed with that wonderful machine; how we put plates of glass over the exhausted tube and crushed them by the pressure; how we put a little hand on the top of the tube, and when the air was exhausted from below, we could not take it off: and the mingled pity and wonder with which we saw a mouse expiring as the air was silently drawn out of the glass receiver into which he was dropped from the trap. But now, and these many years, the man who sold and the one who bought the air-pump, have passed away from earth, and the son of the old optician carries on the business, and unto him I went to find something with which to amuse the great-grandchildren of the other.

We do not take much stock in the tricks of jugglers: or the wonders of sleight-of-hand. We find, if we can, those amusements that have a spice of instruction: not too much, but just enough to say so, and make the entertainment useful. These are the sugar-coated pills they take, and ask for more. Mr. Pike suggested a magic lantern! And of all parlor entertainments, perhaps there is nothing equal to it. There is no mystery and very little science in it; any child can understand its wonder-working, and a little skill can operate it. It throws out on the wall, or a suspended sheet, enlarged pictures of scenes, allegorical and historical, funny and pathetic, religious and scientific, and among them all, of course, the most amusing are the most popular with children, and the more grotesque the better.

The mysterious box arrived, with all the slides and pictures, enough to set me up in business, if I should ever find it in my way to go about the country lecturing on the "curious countries I have seen."

Night came on: the tea things were taken off: out went the lights: the little ones laughed at being in the dark: then sat hush-still, wondering what was to come next. The stream of light that poured from the nose of the lantern spread itself into a great circle, six feet across, on a white sheet. And then, as if emerging from the ark, a procession of beasts, birds and creeping things marched across the screen: the stately elephant and the royal Bengal tiger: the lion of the desert and the lamb of the fold: the solemn owl and the majestic eagle: perfect pictures needing no one to announce their names, for they all spoke for themselves. And when this instructive as well as entertaining menagerie had been admired and duly applauded, the animals returned to their cages and the exhibition proceeded!

The poet Cowper's story of John Gilpin was recited, and then the "train-band captain" went flying on his horse:

"Away went Gilpin neck or nought,
Away went hat and wig,
He little dreamed when he set out
Of running such a rig."

And as the several diverting scenes of this remarkable holiday excursion appeared on the canvas, drawn in these colors of light, as in the story of the poet, "the children screamed and every one cried out 'well done' as loud as they could bawl."

It was well to sober them down now with a few pictures from the Holy Land, scenes of which they had heard from the cradle, and the sight of the hills and cities, and palm and olive trees, were seen with tender interest, and the questions they asked showed that they were learning while they were pleased. Yet it must be said that the young mind has a warm appreciation of the fitness of things, and as amusement is what the little people were after, they gave unmistakable signs, even in the dark, of actually giving the preference to things that are funny. Well, there's no use in trying to put old heads upon young shoulders, and I am glad we can't put old hearts into young bosoms. God bless the little ones, and let them laugh while they can. They will have to cry enough by and by.

So one of them stood up by the light of the lantern burning, and read the veracious and extraordinary ballad of old Mrs. Hubbard, who visited a closet to get a bone for her pet dog. The reading brought to mind the several scenes which the skill of the artist, with the magic of the lantern, now portrayed, while Mother Hubbard and the dog, who stood on his head and played the flute, went through the several gyrations on record in the history that has come down to us from generations of long time ago.

But time fails me to tell what more these children saw by this magic light: with what shouts of merriment they received the life and adventures of Thomas Thumb, Esq., and the more remarkable transformations of the heroine of the little glass slipper: the silent satisfaction with which they received the bits of science and art which were quietly injected into the performance with the information that the price was just the same, there being no additional charge for the sight of Saturn with his rings and all the rest of the stars. When the exhibition was over, the young people, with the evening prayer and nightly blessing on their heads, went to their sweet sleep, happy, restful and loving.

IRENÆUS.

Slightly abridged from the *New York Observer and Chronicle*, January 4, 1877, p. 1.

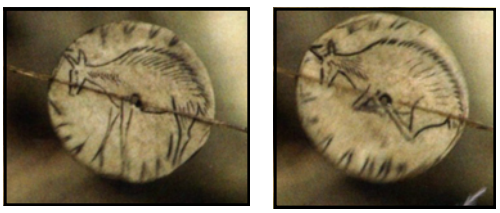
The Research Page provides short summaries of scholarly research articles related to magic lantern history in a variety of disciplines. For a complete bibliography of research articles related to the magic lantern, visit the Zotero Magic Lantern Research Group at: http://www.zotero.org/groups/magic_lantern_research_group.

Christina Twomey. 2012. Framing atrocity: photography and humanitarianism. *History of Photography* 36:255-263.

This is the latest of a number of scholarly articles describing the use of photography to document atrocities, mostly in colonial lands. This article focuses on Turkish atrocities against Bulgarians in the 1870s, the Indian Famine of 1876-1878, and the British missionary campaign against Belgian atrocities in the Belgian Congo in the early 1900s. One of the ways that photographs of atrocities were displayed to the public was through lantern slide shows, which are briefly mentioned. In particular, the author refers to a widely distributed lantern slide show entitled "The Congo Atrocities. A Lecture to Accompany a Series of 60 Photographic Slides for the Optical Lantern." The article is illustrated with some rather grim photographs, including one that appears to be a lantern slide of a mutilated Congolese man.

Marc Azéma and Florent Rivère. 2012. Animation in Paleolithic art: a pre-echo of cinema. *Antiquity* 86:316-324.

This is a fascinating article on the representation of motion in Paleolithic cave paintings. Much of the article focuses on the used of multiple sets of legs and other techniques to suggest motion in a still painting on a cave wall. This idea has been the central focus of research by the first author for many years, and he has previously discussed the idea in a dozen or so publications in French. He argues that Paleolithic artists had a strong sense of how to represent the motion of running animals, an effect that would have been enhanced by viewing the paintings in the light of a flickering fire. Even more intriguing is the suggestion by the second author that bone discs with drawings of animals in different positions on the two sides are a type of Paleolithic thaumatrope. He tested the idea with a reproduction of a disc with a string threaded through the central hole. Rotating the disc caused the image to switch between a standing animal and one lying down. One problem with the argument is that 19th century thaumatropes generally did not represent motion, but instead fused two images to form one, such as a bird on one side and a cage on the other giving the illusion of the bird in the cage when the disc is rotated.



A bone disc thought to be a type of Paleolithic thaumatrope.

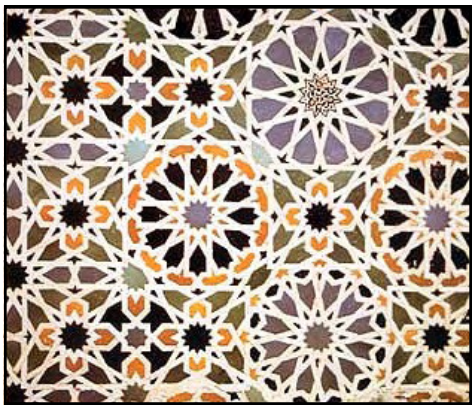
Tom Gunning. 2012. Hand and eye: excavating a new technology of the image in the Victorian Era. *Victorian Studies* 54:495-515.

Tom Gunning, a leading cinema historian, focuses here on the history of the thaumatrope, a type of rotating disc invented in the early 19th century and popularized by John Ayrton Paris as an optical toy. The article traces the invention of the thaumatrope and the reaction of both scientists and the public to the device, including Sir David Brewster's discussion of the thaumatrope in his *Letters on Natural Magic*. Much of the article is rather philosophical, dealing with ideas about perception, reality, and the persistence of vision. The device itself will be familiar to many readers of the *Gazette*, but not necessarily to readers of *Victorian Studies*, and somewhat inexplicably, the article lacks an illustration of this interesting optical toy.

A set of six 19th century thaumatropes, showing the front and back of each disc. Rotating the disc fuses the two images, placing the bird in a cage or the wig on the top of the man's head. This effect can be viewed with videos of moving discs on the webpage for Richard Balzer's collection (http://www.dickbalzer.com/Flash_Gallery.361.0.html).
Photos courtesy of Richard Balzer.

Arnaud Maillet. 2012. Kaleidoscopic imagination. *Grey Room* 48:37-55.

This fascinating article deals with the role of the kaleidoscope, invented by Sir David Brewster in 1816, in the development of aesthetics in the 19th century. Today, and in the 19th century, kaleidoscopes were sold mainly as optical toys for home amusement, but Brewster himself saw wider applications for the instrument. In his treatise on the kaleidoscope, published in 1819, he suggested that designs generated by the kaleidoscope would have practical applications in the design of wall paper, carpets, architectural ornaments, and ornamental painting. He also described various ways that the kaleidoscope could be combined with instruments that would allow an almost infinite variety of images to be traced on paper. These included the camera lucida, magic lantern, and the solar microscope. At the Crystal Palace exhibition in London in 1851, a Frenchman, Rouget de Lisle, was awarded a medal for the invention of a kaleidoscopes that could be used to compose drawings for carpet and silk factories. The author also discusses at some length the development of a "kaleidoscopic imagination" or aesthetic. He focuses particularly on the work of Rev. John Gibson Macvicar. In an 1837 treatise, *On the Beautiful, the Picturesque, the Sublime*, he devoted a full chapter to "Kaleidoscopic Beauty, or the Beauty of Angles and Areas." Macvicar believed that certain angles and symmetrical arrangements of polygons were most likely to be perceived as beautiful. He pointed to the many examples of symmetrical, repeated design elements in nature—starfish, jellyfish, sea anemones, flower petals, peacock tails, etc. Other authors used kaleidoscopic aesthetic principles to advocate for a revival of Gothic architechture. Moorish architecture, such as found in the Alhambra in Spain, also exhibited many kaleidoscopic elements, and Charles Dickens actually referred to "the old Alhambra kaleidoscope of delight." The kaleidoscopic aesthetic even found its way into the language of science. Julien-Joseph Virey described the formation of organic molecules as "protean composites like the ever-changing pieces of the kaleidoscope."



Kaleidoscopic wall mosaic from the Alhambra in Spain, a palace built 900 years before the invention of the kaleidoscope.

Erkki Huhtamo. 2011. Natural magic: a short cultural history of moving images, pp. 3-15. In: William Guynn, ed. *The Routledge Companion to Film History.* Routledge, London and New York.

In this chapter, Magic Lantern Society member Erkki Huhtamo provides a brief history of moving images and the optical devices that produce them, making full use of recent scholarship by film and magic lantern historians. He continues the recent trend of examining optical toys and motion devices as cultural artifacts in their own right, rather than relegating them to footnotes as "pre-cinema" devices—clearly the inventors of these optical toys were not in any sense looking into the future to anticipate the invention of moving picture photography. Huhtamo gives a thorough history of moving pictures produced by magic lantern slides, moving panoramas, zoetropes, praxinoscopes, phenakistiscopes and other so-called "philosophical toys." He identifies four distinct "practices" related to the history of the moving image—screen practice (as exemplified by the magic lantern), peep practice (including early peep shows and later devices such as the Kinetoscope), touch practice (devices that had to be moved by hand, such as the zoetrope), and mobile practice (in which the viewer moves, while the display remains static—this can encompass everything from viewing a circular panorama to window shopping and observing the passing landscape from a moving train). He makes the interesting point that the origin of itinerant showmen displaying devices such as magic lanterns and peep shows in the 18th century, can be attributed to the difficulty of obtaining new views for these devices (using the analogy of "software" for a modern computer). Hence, in the absence of new material to show to the same audience, showmen had to constantly seek out new audiences for whom the slides or peep views would be fresh. The same could be said for later traveling magic lantern lecturers, such as John L. Stoddard and George Reed Cromwell, who gave the same lectures with the same slides over and over again, but moved from city to city, mostly by train, in search of new audiences. Today, we carry our media devices with us—iPads, laptops, smart phones, digital music players—and the itinerant showman or lecturer has largely disappeared.

Erkki Huhtamo. 2012. A history of peep practice, pp. 32-51. In: André Gaudreault, Nicolas Dulac, and Santiago Hidalgo. *A Companion to Early Cinema*. John Wiley & Sons, New York.

This chapter expands on one of the four "practices" described in the previous piece, the practice of peeping at images. There is some overlap with an earlier book chapter by Huhtamo on "The pleasure of the peephole," which was previously reviewed in the *Gazette*. This contribution has a somewhat different focus and is written in a clear style accessible to the general reader. It also includes several illustrations from the author's collection that were not in the

earlier chapter. These include a wonderful cabinet card photograph from the 1860s showing a little girl peering into a cabinet stereoscope on a parlor table. Huhtamo's concept of peep media includes any sort of device which requires the viewer to peer through a hole or lens to view a hidden image. Such devices emphasize the personalized experience of viewing images privately, although certainly some viewing devices, such as the cosmorama or a room full of Kinetoscopes, had a social component as well. The author traces the origins of peep media to three cultural developments in the Renaissance—the development of a theory of linear perspective, the growing interest in "natural magic," and the popularity of "cabinets of curiosity" among philosophers and scientists. An early manifestation of these cultural trends is the construction of perspective boxes by Dutch painters, who created distorted scenes of rooms painted on the inside of a small box, which appeared in normal perspective when viewed from a particular angle. Larger versions of such boxes, with three-dimensional furniture, can be viewed in many modern science museums.

Willem Hackmann. 2011. The magic lantern for scientific enlightenment and entertainment, pp. 113-139. In: Peter Heering and Roland Wittje, eds. *Learning by Doing. Experiments and Instruments in the History of Science Teaching.* Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart.

This chapter provides a well researched and well written history of the use of magic lanterns in science education and lectures. The author, a former curator at the Museum of Science in Oxford, makes full use of recent scholarship published in books and the journal of the Magic Lantern Society in the United Kingdom. The chapter should be of interest to many readers of the *Gazette*, but unfortunately, it is buried in a rather obscure symposium volume that is expensive and difficult to find (I got my copy through interlibrary loan). The author describes the invention and early scientific interest in the magic lantern, which often could be found among other optical instruments in "cabinets of curiosity" assembled by wealthy individuals. He traces the use of the lantern in scientific education to the early 18th century, when illustrations of lanterns increasingly appeared in textbooks on physics and optics. He also discusses the close association of early magic lanterns with two other optical instruments, the lucernal and solar microscopes, and he describes specialized demonstration lanterns in which various scientific devices could be inserted between the condensing lense and the projecting lenses to project images of the apparatus on a screen. Scientific "special effects" are described, starting with a moveable slide by Huygens that involved a skeleton removing its head and including rackwork astronomy slides and other complex motion slides. The use of the lantern for scientific lectures and instruction really took off with the invention of photographic slides in the 1850s and the perfection of brighter sources of illumination, such as limelight and carbon-arc lights. He discusses lecturers such as Michael Faraday and John Henry Pepper, who made extensive use of the magic lantern. He also describes motion devices such as the projecting phenakistiscope.

Lavinia Maddaluno. 2012. Unveiling nature: wonder and deception in eighteenth-century London shows and exhibitions. *Nuncias* 27:56-80.

This article focuses on the exhibition of machines, clockwork devices, and automata in 18th century London. Although written by a historian of science, the article deals less with philosophers and scientists who demonstrated such devices than with showman, conjurors, illusionists, and circus owners who presented these attractions to the general public. There are occasional brief references to magic lanterns as devices of wonder, but the main emphasis is on mechanical devices. The article provides an interesting context for understanding the London entertainment scene in which magic lantern shows were imbedded.

Helen Groth. 2012. Projections of Alice: anachronistic reading and the temporality of mediation. *Textual Practices* 26:667-686.

Helen Groth is one of the leading British literary historians who combines knowledge of literature with a deep understanding of the magic lantern and other optical devices. She has previously written extensively on Charles Dickens and the magic lantern, and here turns her attention to Lewis Carroll, a writer who not only enjoyed attending and giving magic lantern shows, but who also integrated optical imagery into his writings (for example, the "dissolving view" Cheshire Cat). This article has a bit more academic jargon than some of her previous writings, but nonetheless provides a very interesting discussion of the adaptation of Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* books as magic lantern shows, stage plays, and silent movies. An early adaptation by George Buckland in 1876 was presented at the Royal Polytechnic. It consisted mostly of dissolving views based on the John Tenniel illustrations in Carroll's books, but also included a scence with live actors who moved about on stage, but did not speak. Carroll attended performances of this show and even made suggestions to Buckland for improvements. He also was closely attentive to the various stage adaptations of his books that appeared in late 19th century England. Yet another interesting adaptation was a 1903 silent film made by Cecil Hepworth (son of magic lantern showman T. C. Hepworth), which Carroll did not live to see. Many of the scenes in the film are drawn from earlier lantern slide images and other illustrations. In addition to describing the various media adaptations of the *Alice* books, the author discusses at some length Carroll's use of optical metaphors and imagery, and frequent direct references to optical instruments from magic lanterns to stereoscopes, telescopes, and microscopes. Some authors have argued that Carroll's disappearing Cheshire Cat was directly inspired by dissolving views and ghost shows he attended at the Royal Polytechnic, although evidence for this is circumstantial. Certainly there is no doubt that Carroll was heavily influenced by magic lantern technology, perhaps more than almost any other writer of the period.

Kara M. Manning. 2011. "That's the effect of living backwards": technological change, Lewis Carroll's *Alice* books, and Tim Burton's *Alice in Wonderland*. *Neo-Victorian Studies* 4:154-179.

Like the previous article, this paper deals with the connections between the writings of Lewis Carroll and the evolution of optical technologies from the camera to the motion picture. The article begins and ends with discussions of Tim Burton's 2010 film version of *Alice in Wonderland*, which the author characterizes as a Neo-Victorian approach to the subject. The author is much influenced by the model of technological evolution advocated by Brian Winston, who sees early optical technologies such as the magic lantern and other optical toys as striving toward the evolution of the cinema. In this telling, audiences for earlier technologies were "waiting for" the advent of the cinema. In Winston's view, earlier technologies, such as the magic lantern and flexible film evolved into cinema in response to societal "demand" that these technologies be combined to produce moving pictures. This model strikes me a as a bit odd, because it is hard to imagine audiences "waiting" for a yet-to-be-discovered technology. Audiences for magic lantern shows in the 1860s were no more anticipating the later invention of cinema than users of whale-oil lamps anticipated the arrival of the incandescent lightbulb. There is something of Lamarckian evolution in this view, with early technologies striving toward the perfection of the cinema, as Lamarck envisioned animals striving toward greater perfection. In any case, Manning uses this model to argue that Carroll's first *Alice* book, *Alice in Wonderland* (1865), was heavily influenced by his interest in still photography, while his second book, *Through the Looking Glass* (1871), has a more "cinematic" flavor, despite being written 25 years before the appearance of the cinema. One could equally argue that the apparent cinematic qualities of the second book were strongly influenced by contemporary technologies, such as dissolving views and optical motion toys, rather than representing "an anxious hint toward the cinematic," as the author maintains. She argues that "Carroll's texts narratively reflect the development of the cinema," a development that would not occur for another quarter of a century. She buttresses her argument by viewing Carroll's books as actual optical toys. Carroll took care to ensure that illustrations were placed in the books in exactly the right positions. For example, the Cheshire Cat appears on one side of a page, while the cat's grin is revealed by flipping the page over to the reverse side. In *The Nursery Alice*, published in 1896, Carroll even instructed young readers to play with the book as an optical toy, flipping pages to produce the optical illusion of the cat transforming into the grin. In Manning's view, this shows that Carroll, writing on eve of the appearance of cinema, had "the foresight to perceive the logical progression of nineteenth-century visual technologies and to capture an emerging continuum of cinematic process in his writing."

***The Magic Lantern Society Newsletter*, numbers 108 (June 2012) and 109 (September 2012).**

The Magic Lantern Society in Britain has made some changes in their journal publications, starting this year. Their research journal, *The New Magic Lantern Journal*, literally has been folded into the society's *Newsletter*—in *Newsletter* issue 108, we find Vol. 11, no. 1 of the *NMLJ* starting on p. 6, while in issue 109, *NMLJ* Vol. 11, no. 2 also starts on p. 6. The beginning of each issue contains newsletter material, although some of this, such as a brief piece on dissolving views by Bill Barnes, involves some research as well. This new arrangement may be a bit confusing for scholars trying to cite articles from the journal, since the page numbers for the research journal are a subset of the pages for the *Newsletter*, and it is a little hard to tell where the journal ends and the newsletter takes up again. Robert MacDonald and Gwen Sebus, both of whom also are members of our society, are the editors, with Gwen taking over editing of the research part of the journal. Another change is that more color has been incorporated throughout the issues, which provides an opportunity to see images of lantern slides and ephemera in color. There also will be an increase in price of £ 10.00 next year, although there is a corresponding decrease in rates for students.

The first two issues with the new format contain some very interesting material. Gwen Sebus starts off with a very detailed and well-illustrated article, "A new look at a new Tale of the Tub" [*NMLJ* 11 (1):6-8]. She traces the history of the story of the tiger and the tub and describes all of the various sets of lantern slides produced for this story. The original story was published in 1841 in verse by Frederick William Naylor Bayley and subsequently published in many other editions. Lantern slides were produced by a variety of well known manufacturers, from Ernst Planck in Germany to Carpenter and Westley, York, and others in England and Briggs in the United States. The same issue contains a fascinating article on "The collection of Musschenbroek slides in the Stedelijk Museum de Lakenhal, Leiden, The Netherlands" by Tristan Mostert [*NMLJ* 11 (1):9-11]. These fabulous 18th century slides are in wonderful condition and are illustrated in color. The author provides a description of the sometime odd images on the slides and relates them to contemporary Dutch prints. This issue of the *Newsletter* also contains a short article by John Hyett on lantern slides of the Sudan War in the 1880s, which traces the origins of many of the images to engravings published in *The Illustrated London News* and *The Graphic*. Judging from the lines running down the side of the page, this last article appears to be part of the newsletter, rather than the research journal, but of course, it includes some original research as well.

The second issue in the new format includes a couple of short research articles (some much longer ones apparently are in the works). Lester Smith has contributed an article on "Cynicus Slides" [*NMLJ* 11 (2):6-7]. Cynicus was the pen name for Scottish cartoonist Martin Anderson (1854-1932). His humorous images, originally drawn for postcards, were made into sets of lantern slides, often featuring puns and other jokes, thus illustrating another cross-over between lantern slides and postcards, similar to the Bamforth song slides and postcards. The article includes some great illustrations of slides and some very interesting advertisements for the slides. The only other article in the research journal part of this issue is a one-page piece by Kees van der Haak on "Real Trench Art" (*NMLJ* 11 (2):8]. He describes three strips of glass, purchased more than 30 years ago, that show images of soldiers in trenches during World War I. Two have images scratched onto blackened glass, so they look like photographic negatives, while the third is painted in black on clear glass. It is hard to know how these apparent lantern slides were used, but the author suggests they might have been shown to wounded soldiers in a hospital. The most amazing thing about them is that they survived at all, given the carnage and destruction that took place on the Western Front.

Peter Walsh. 2012. Jasper Redfern's No. 1 Vaudeville Company: regional exhibition practice in transition. ***Early Popular Visual Culture*** **10:273-298. Vanessa Toulmin and Peter Walsh. 2012. The Fred Holmes Collection.** ***Early Popular Visual Culture*** **10:299-311.**

Peter Walsh's article describes the career of Jasper Redfern, an early exhibitor of motion pictures in England. He began showing films in 1896, just after the first showing of motion pictures, and continued until the early 1900s, when his firm eventually failed. Walsh's research is based on a recently discovered collection assembled by Fred Holmes, who served as a projectionist for Redfern and later as Assistant Manager of the enterprise. The collection includes handbills, programs, and advertisements, correspondence related to the movie exhibition business, posters, and over 100 glass negatives and lantern slides. These are now in the National Fairground Archive at the University of Sheffield. The companion article by Vanessa Toulmin and Peter Walsh describes the collection in more detail and provides illustrations of some of the ephemera.

Two aspects of the Redfern story will be of interest to magic lantern scholars and collectors. First, the shows he put together borrowed from earlier magic lantern show practices. Second, the shows sometimes included lantern slides. Many of the handbills advertising his shows almost seem to be from and earlier era, complete with ever-changing type faces and type sizes. The shows were true variety shows, with short films, lantern slides, musical entertainment, and live performers. One handbill from 1899 (Fig. 1, p. 279) lists lantern slides of English scenery on the program, while other programs offered both moving pictures and lantern slides of the Oberammergau Passion Play (the motion pictures being reenactments of the actual play, since the play itself could not be filmed). Redfern also gave demonstrations of "photography in natural colors," as well as X-ray photography. The discovery of X-rays occurred at nearly the same time as the advent of motion pictures, and public exhibitions of X-ray photography were all the rage before the dangers of radiation exposure were fully understood. Redfern's expertise in X-ray photography proved to be the salvation of his career. After his show business company failed, he was employed by the army in World War I as an X-ray technician and later worked in hospitals until his death in 1928.

Reminder: Members of the Magic Lantern Society of the United States and Canada can subscribe to *Early Popular Visual Culture* at a heavily discounted rate.

Juliette Wood. 2012. Fairytales and the magic lantern: Henry Underhill's lantern slides in the Folklore Society collection. ***Folklore*** **122:249-268.**

Henry Underhill is one of the more remarkable figures in magic lantern history. A grocer and amateur naturalist, Underhill became one of the premier painters of magic lantern slides in England. His slides included natural history subjects and views of ancient stone monuments, designed for educational purposes. He also painted slides based on folktales from around the world. The Folklore Society holds a substantial collection of his folktale slides. Juliette Wood carefully traces the origins of the images in these slides in this meticulously researched article. In many cases, she identifies the particular editions of collected folktales that served as sources for Underhill's paintings. He often copied the artwork of the illustrators of these printed books, but added his own touches as well. For example, a set of slides based on Joel Chandler Harris's Brer Rabbit stories, which are set in the southern United States, include identifiable elements of the English landscape. They also show the influence of Japanese art in the style of painting. Underhill copied Japanese art for some of his slides and even lectured on Japanese painting. His lantern slides are some of the finest examples of hand-painted lantern slides to be found today, and many fortunately are preserved in collections of the Folklore Society, the Museum of the History of Science in Oxford, and other museums. Two slides are illustrated in color in this article. I wished for more illustrations, especially of the work of the artists whose printed illustrations in books influenced Underhill's own work. Perhaps the best sources for viewing some of Underhill's spectacular lantern slides of folktales are two children's books edited by Neil Philip and still available for low prices (sometimes for one cent!) on the internet : *Drakenstail Visits the King* and *Guleesh and the King of France's Daughter* (both published by Philomel Books, New York, 1986).

Society President Sharon Koch opening the 2006 convention in Seattle. Photo by K. D. Wells.

Sharon Lorraine Koch (1946-2012)

The Magic Lantern Society of the United States and Canada has lost one of its most loyal and enthusiastic members with the death of former President Sharon Koch.

Sharon was born on Feb. 5, 1946 in Oakland, California, to Paul and Lorraine Sencevicky. She attended schools in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, Sumner and Auburn, Washington and graduated from Auburn High in 1964. She completed her B.A. in sociology and anthropology from Western Washington University.

Sharon met the man who would become her husband while commuting to Highline Community College. After transferring to Western, Sharon and Mike were married on December 17, 1966. Mike worked in the Kitsap County Prosecutors Office and then started a private practice law in Silverdale in 1973. After living in Manchester and Chico, they made their home in Seabeck and have lived there continuously. They had two children, Adrienne and Ryan.

Throughout her life, Sharon was a Girl Scout leader, PTA president, headed up the church youth group at St. Antony's Episcopal Church in Silverdale, and was a member of the Magic Lantern Society of United States and Canada for over 17 years.

The first Society convention Sharon attended was Cleveland in 1998. She accompanied Joe and Alice Koch on the cross county trip while Mike Koch was busy with his law practice.

For the 2000 Hollywood convention, Sharon and Mike teamed with the Easterdays to present the "Patchwork Girl of Oz" in a patchwork dress made by Sharon. The Kochs and Easterdays joined forces again for the 2002 Rochester Convention with the very tongue-in-cheek "First Family of Rochester" presentation.

Sharon and Mike were at every convention from 2000 in Hollywood through 2012 in Tacoma. Sharon headed up the convention planning for the 2006 Seattle convention and helped with many aspects of the 2012 Tacoma convention.

Sharon served as Secretary-Treasurer from 2002-2004 and President from 2004-2008, keeping busy with correspondence and writing the "President's Corner" message for each *Gazette*. As past-president, she helped with officer nominations and counting ballots for several years.

Sharon and Mike often hosted the Northwest Corner group in their Seabeck home, always with good food and company. Among her lantern slide collection, she especially was interested in slides of light houses, making occasional purchases to add to her collection.

Sharon always was the first to volunteer for Northwest Corner activities – she volunteered at Port Gamble shows in 2009, 2010, and the last show in 2011; and at Fort Steilacoom from the first children's show in 2009 through 2012. She volunteered at the Northwest Corner display table at the annual Puget Sound Photographic Collectors Society Camera Show and Swap for many years.

She loved scrapbooking, gardening and camping in her spare time. She won the Golden Acorn Award for her outstanding work within the PTA.

She had her girlhood dream of going to the pyramids of Egypt fulfilled in 2001. Throughout her adult life, she loved to travel and she and Mike visited New Zealand, South America, Galapagos Islands, Ireland, Turkey, Greece and many more European countries. She traveled to Russia with her father, Paul, on a church trip. She fulfilled a lifelong ambition to travel to Africa, despite her knowledge that she had breast cancer. She met up with the family's former exchange student from South Africa while she was there, and walked with lions.

Sharon beat breast cancer, but later was diagnosed with brain cancer and didn't want to put her body through radiation when she had already been through chemotherapy. She died on Aug. 25, 2012 while in hospice care.

The Society greatly appreciates Sharon's work for the Society as member, officer, volunteer, and friend for many years, and we miss her very much.

Hand-colored copper-plate magic lantern slides by Wilhelm Hoffman of Dresden. Wells collection.